

Families Across Michigan

October/November, 2003

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*"Let us put our minds together and see what kind
of future we can make for our children."
-- Chief Sitting Bull*

Families Across Michigan
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Coalition for Adoption Rights Equality, Inc.

What is the Coalition for Adoption Rights Equality, Inc.?

Mission Statement

The Coalition for Adoption Rights Equality, Inc. (CARE) is a children's advocacy group working to secure the legal recognition of parent-child relationships in all families regardless of the parents' marital status or sexual orientation.

CARE Objectives Include:

1. Educate potentially supportive groups across Michigan and nationwide regarding how second parent adoption is in the best interests of children.
2. Build coalitions, including developing other CARE affiliates across the state that will provide a rapid response to fight potential legislative bans on adoptions by unmarried heterosexual parents and gay/lesbian parents.
3. Impact the electoral process with an emphasis on upcoming elections.
4. Support legal advisors as they advocate for families involved in current litigation.

Non-Discrimination Statement

CARE is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, sex, color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.



Children Need Second Parent Adoptions

In Michigan some children have one parent that is not legally recognized. Children need the legal recognition of parent-child relationships regardless of their parents' marital status or sexual orientation. Second parent adoption secures this legal recognition. It guarantees the children a host of legal and financial benefits that most families take for granted such as:

- Full health insurance benefits
- Full pension or social security benefits
- Medical authorization for routine or emergency care
- Permission to attend school functions
- Permanence of extended familial relationships
- Continuity of a parent-child relationship in the event of separation or death

CARE advocates for second parent adoptions because they are in the best interests of children.

For more information about CARE, you can email them at

CareTaskForce@yahoo.com
or visit their website at
secondparentadoption.org

Families for International Children International Adoption Fair

November 8, 2003
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Kentwood Community Church
1200 60th SE, Kentwood

Through panel discussions, presentations and information booths, adoption agency professionals, international adoption specialists and adoptive parents will share ideas and information on such topics as:

- Raising transracial children
- Common post-institutional issues
- Adopting older and special needs children
- The homestudy process
- Single-parent adoption
- Resources for help and support
- Choosing an agency
- Affording adoption

Who Should Attend?

- Anyone considering international adoption
- Anyone in the adoption process
- Adoptive parents

No preregistration is required and there is NO CHARGE for admission.

For more details and a schedule of events

visit the FFIC website at www.ffcgr.org or contact Jodi Lewis at (616) 281-5609.

New Resources Available in the MARE Library

MARE's resource library has recently grown! If you're interested in borrowing any of these books, or to get a complete listing of our resources, please feel free to call the MARE office at (800) 589-MARE. As always, books are available for loan for a month, and videos for two weeks.

Parenting the strong-willed child

By Rex Forehand & Nicholas Long

Angry Kids, Frustrated Parents

By Terry L. Hyland & Jerry Davis

Go to Your Room! Consequences that teach)

By Shari Steelsmith

Parenting To Build Character In Your Teen

By Michael S. Josephson, Val J. Peter, & Tom Dowd

Dangerous Kids

By Michael Sterba & Jerry Davis

The Healing Power of the Family

By Richard Delaney

Communicating Through Play: Techniques

By Judith Cipolla, Dorothy Benson McGown & Mary Anne Yanulis

The Face In The Mirror

By Marion Crook

I Miss My Foster Parents

By Stefon Herbert

Supporting An Adoption

By Pat Holmes

The Handbook for Single Adoptive Parents

By Hope Marindin

Parenting Your Adopted Older Child

By Brenda McCreight

Online Survey: Parenting Biological and Adopted Children Together

"I am the parent of biological, adopted, and foster children. I am gathering information for the purpose of writing a book about the unique dynamics of parenting biological and adopted children simultaneously. All information gathered in this survey will remain strictly confidential, unless you give me permission to quote you in my book. There are no "right or wrong" answers. I realize this will take some time to complete, so please accept my sincere appreciation for your time and efforts."

~ Nancy Spoolstra

You can find the online survey at the About.com website on adoption:

adoption.about.com/library/nosearch/bladoptedbio-survey.htm

Adopted & Foster Child Assessment

By Foster W. Cline & Cathy Holding

The Healing Power Of The Family

By Richard J. Delaney

When Love Is Not Enough

By Nancy L. Thomas

Attaching In Adoption

By Deborah Gray

Parenting The Hurt Child

By Gregory C. Keck & Reginia M. Kupecky

Children Who Shock & Surprise

By Elizabeth Randolph

The Blending Of Foster & Adopted Children

By Heather Lehr Wagner

Can't You Sit Still?

By Randolph W. Severson

About the Adoption-Friendly Workplace Program

for more information, go to the website at
<http://www.adoptionfriendlyworkplace.org/>

The goal of Adoption-Friendly Workplace initiative is to encourage employers to offer adoption benefits and to help employees find out how to advocate for benefits at the workplace. The program is sponsored by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and the National Adoption Center.

Each year, American families adopt more than 100,000 children. They come from the United States and other countries; they may be babies or older children; brothers and sisters; children with disabilities.

No matter what type of child is adopted, the adoption process demands time and money, and creates stress that can affect job performance.

An employer can ease the burden, maintain productivity and provide equity for all employees creating families, whether through birth or adoption, by offering a benefits package that includes financial support, leave time and resource and referral services.

What is an Adoption-Friendly Workplace?

While all organizations that offer

adoption benefits are different, there are some similarities in the types of benefits that adoption-friendly companies offer. Below is a brief summary of what many companies offer:

Financial reimbursement

Employers who offer financial assistance generally start by offering \$1,000 per adoption or matching maternity benefits—with some employers offering as much as \$15,000 for eligible expenses.

Time off

Time off is generally offered as:

- Paid leave, defined as time off from work where the employee continues to receive full or partial salary.
- Unpaid leave, which is time off from work where the employee receives no pay, but may continue to receive benefits with no loss of “grade level”.

Understanding

A little understanding can go a long way. Providing even the most basic financial assistance and a small amount of time off sends a message to employ-

ees of caring and equality.

Learn more

We've put together a simple guide that helps make the decision to add adoption benefits in the workplace easy. In this guide, you'll learn:

- What everyone should understand about adoption
- Why you should consider adding adoption benefits
- Detailed information on what an Adoption-Friendly Workplace looks like

The guide also features a CD-ROM with valuable resources:

For employees:

- 7 steps to requesting adoption benefits within your organization
- Frequently asked questions
- Guides to help you prepare a formal request

For employers

- Sample adoption benefits policies
- Benefits rollout resources
- Frequently asked questions

For more information, please visit the website above, or call (877) 777-4222

The Online Advantage

Some of the advantages of taking an adoption preparation course online include:

- No waiting weeks or months for the next course to start.
- No leaving home one or two nights a week for classes.
- No dressing up, baby sitters, parking meters, or transportation costs.
- No driving in bad weather.

You can participate from any location that has Internet access.

Is It Fun?

You bet! You'll make new friends. Prospective parents will still “meet”

**The
Learning
Center**

Online Adoption Training A New Way to Learn About Adoption Available

Visit the National Adoption Center's website at www.adopt.org

other newcomers online in the chat room, and enjoy learning together.

Tell Me More

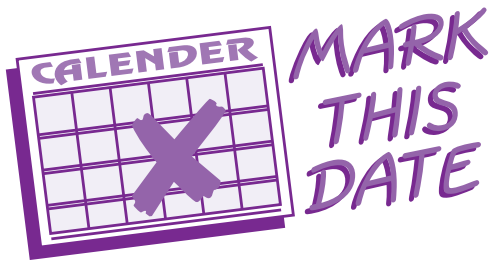
The course prepares adults for the adoption process and for parenting adopted children, especially children with special needs, through an easy convenient online study method called distance learning.

Instructors guide you every step of the way in the use of email, message boards and live chat rooms. There are also lists of various web sites and books

at the end of each course section where you can find further information on any topic in the course.

What Does It Cost?

The fee for this course is \$100.00. You may want to check with your adoption agency or state about possible reimbursement for this training as a one time non-recurring cost. Once you have registered, more information about how to make this payment can be found at our payment options page.



Jackson County Support Group Training
 Redeemer Lutheran Church
 3637 Spring Arbor Rd
 Third Tuesday of every month
 For more information, contact Peggy Becker at
 (517) 563-2157 or
 Lisa Porter at (517) 782-9155

MFAPA's Adoption Training Seminar

The Michigan Foster and Adoption Parent Association (MFAPA) will be hosting its Adoption Training Seminar on November 20 - 22, 2003 at the McCamly Plaza Hotel in Battle Creek, MI. This year's featured speaker will be Dr. T. Barry Brazelton, who will speak on Touchpoints.

On Friday, November 21st at 7:00 p.m., MARE will be sponsoring a Calling Out For Those Who Wait ceremony, featuring the Rev. W.C. Martin of the Bennett Chapel Baptist Church in Possum Trot, TX. For more information contact MFAPA at (800) 632-4180, or visit their website at www.mfapa.org

November is National Adoption Month! The Michigan Supreme Court and Family Independence Agency have set a date of Tuesday, November 25, 2003 as the first-ever statewide adoption day.

Did you adopt a child from the MARE book? If so, please let us know -- we may have older photos of your child! If you have any questions, or would like to know if we have a photo of your child, please feel free to call the MARE office at (800) 589-MARE. We need to hear from you before December 1, 2003!



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